EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

BRUSSELS

Brussels, 26th January, 1989

Mrs. Beate Weber
Member of the European Parliament
Sickingenstrasse 1
6900 Heidelberg 1
WEST GERMANY

Dear Mrs. Weber,

We have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 11th January, 1989 addressed to H.E. Ambassador Atmono Suryo in which you have raised some queries.

As regards the latest development of East Timor, we would like to inform you that on 29th December, 1988, the Indonesian Government officially declared the Presidential Decree no 62/1988 which constitutes the equal status of the East Timor Province as the other provinces in Indonesia. As the consequence of the equalization status of the East Timor Province with the others, all administrative matters which will become the competence of the local government of the East Timor Province are now being processed by the Department of Home Affairs, especially with regard to the autonomy of the Province, as you referred to in your letter.

As for the visits of foreign journalists to East Timor, the existing national regulation is still applicable which stipulates permission must be obtained from the Indonesian Department of Information as is in the case of all other Indonesian provinces. The Department of Tourism, Post and

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Telecommunication of Indonsia is now also studying the procedures with regard to the tourist visits for foreigners.

With reference to the arrest of some 3,000 persons surrounding President Suharto's visit to Dili last November 1988, we regrettably inform you that the foreign media have manipulated the event. They did not reflect the true figures and motives. According to the official information which we received from the competent authority in Jakarta only 60 persons were summoned and questioned based on information that these people were about to organize a demonstration without prior notice and permission from the local authority. Afterwards, only 8 persons were still in custody for further investigation whereas the other 52 had been released. The 60 persons who were summoned are members of the "Santo Antonio Foundation" from the Oequisi district, an organization which was set up in East Timor in 1963 under the umbrella of Catholism during the Portuguese colonial administration. Later on, the Catholic Church prohibited the existence of this foundation because of spreading teachings which deviated from the Catholic dogma, among others the practice of curing people with traditional magic elements. Then, ex-communion sanction were given to the followers by the Diocese in Dili. Until 1985 this foundation was continously seeking support from teachers and student circles, but have never obtained any response so that the supporters of this foundation have become an isolated group of people. We believe the Governor of East Timor, Mr. Mario Carascalao, had also given you ample information during your visit in East Timor concerning these people of the Oequisi district as we elucidated above.

With respect to your last query concerning the chances for referendum being taken in East Timor, we have to inform you that there is no indication whatsoever from the Indonesian Government. Therefore, we could only refer to the recent repeated statement of the Indonesian Foreign Minister reiterating that the Indonesian Government is ready at anytime to continue the dialogue with the Portuguese Government to seek the solution of East Timor based on the 1983 UN decision through bilateral talks.

Finally, we sincerely hope that all information given will be of any assistance to you and meet your satisfaction.

Accept, Mrs. Weber, the assurances of our highest consideration.

For the Ambassador,
Acting Deputy Chief of Mission

I.G.N.K. Sumantera
Minister-Counsellor